



## Teamwork

**W**orking together to get the job done seems simple enough, but how easy is it? We'll take a close look at working in teams and how to make teamwork more successful.

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### Road Map



### Optional Activities

It's sometimes helpful to kick off a session on teams with an exercise that demonstrates the power of teamwork and working together to solve problems. A couple of potential activities are: "How many squares" and "Finished Files." These exercises are outlined in detail at the end of this section.

If you chose one of these activities, conclude with a brief discussion about how the Team or Group was able to solve the problem easier than most of the individuals. Discuss how people see things differently and that diversity usually adds to better solutions to the problems we face.

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### Why Teams?

STATE: The ability of a group to achieve greater results is sometimes referred to as synergy. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. In simpler terms, 1+1 adds up to more than 2.

STATE: This is one reason the Coast Guard has taken a team approach to our jobs.

STATE: Think of some successful team experiences you've had. They can be related to sports teams you've been on, school groups, or Coast Guard Teams. After you've thought about these, jot down some notes about what made them so successful.

(Allow time for them to write)

ASK: What are some of the characteristics you wrote about these teams?

ASK: What are some of the benefits of teamwork?

Possible Answers:

- Better decisions
- More involvement
- Everyone knows what's going on
- Everyone feels like they play a part in the work being done
- Diversity of ideas, etc.

STATE: Here's what the experts say about the characteristics of effective teams:

- Inspired leadership
- Specific, quantifiable goals
- Commitment and Loyalty
- Effective Communication
- Wins along the way
- Aware of external environment
- Performance - everyone does the work
- Open minded progressive thinking

- Recognition

Go over each of the above and discuss some examples of what it might look like

ASK: Are there any downsides to taking the team approach?

Possible answers: time consuming, conflict, lack of knowledge and or experience, lack of ownership/responsibility, etc

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## Decisions

ASK: Who makes decisions in the Coast Guard?

STATE: We can break this down into three types of decisions:

- Leader Made
- Leader Made w/ Input
- Team Made

ASK: What are the advantages to **Leader Made** decisions?

They are quick, direct, and you know what you want, etc.

ASK: What are the disadvantages?

There may be a lack of buy-in, might not have all information, no synergy, etc.

ASK: What are the advantages to decisions that are **Leader Made w/ Input**.

There is some buy-in, usually quicker than team made decision, more information to make a decision, etc.

ASK: What are the disadvantages?

They could be time consuming, may not use input (it is important that you let people know up front that you may not use their input), etc.

STATE: We've already talked about the advantages and disadvantages of teams and team based decision-making.

ASK: Based on what we talked about, when do you think it's appropriate for team decision making?

Answer: When there's time available and you'd like to invest the time to take advantage of the benefits we discussed earlier.

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Group  
Development  
Stages

STATE: Just like an individual goes through stages of development, so do groups. In the case of groups, these stages are called Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing.

Pass out copies of the “Stages of Group Development” (found at the end of this module).

STATE: Take a few minutes to review the Stages of Group Development chart, then discuss how your experiences fit into these stages.

Give them about 5 minutes for discussion.

STATE: In the storming stage of group development there is a greater potential for conflict to occur.

ASK: What are some ways to handle this conflict?

Possible answers include: get people to understand each others point of view, don't let the conflict get out of hand, explain to them that a little conflict is normal in the group process.

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Squares Activity

Set up: Make copies of the grid at the end of this section or draw it on a chart pad. Pass out copies.

STATE: Individually, now write down how many squares you see.

Allow only a few seconds for them to do this. [NOTE: there are 30 squares.]

Split them into groups of 5-6 each.

STATE: Now, in your groups, take a moment to compare your answers and come up with a group answer.

ASK: Is your team answer different than you individual answer?

In most cases, the team answer will be larger.

ASK: Why is that?

A possible answer: In a team, we get to see diverse perspectives.

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Finished Files  
Activity

Set up: Make copies of the text in the box at the end of this section or draw it on a chart pad. Pass out copies.

STATE: Individually, read the sentence once and write down how many “Fs” you see.

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Allow only a few seconds for them to do this. [NOTE: there are 6 “Fs.”]

ASK: How many did you see?

You will most likely get a variety of responses.

ASK: Who’s right? How many are there?

Wait until they realize the answer.

ASK: Why was it easy to miss some of the “Fs?”

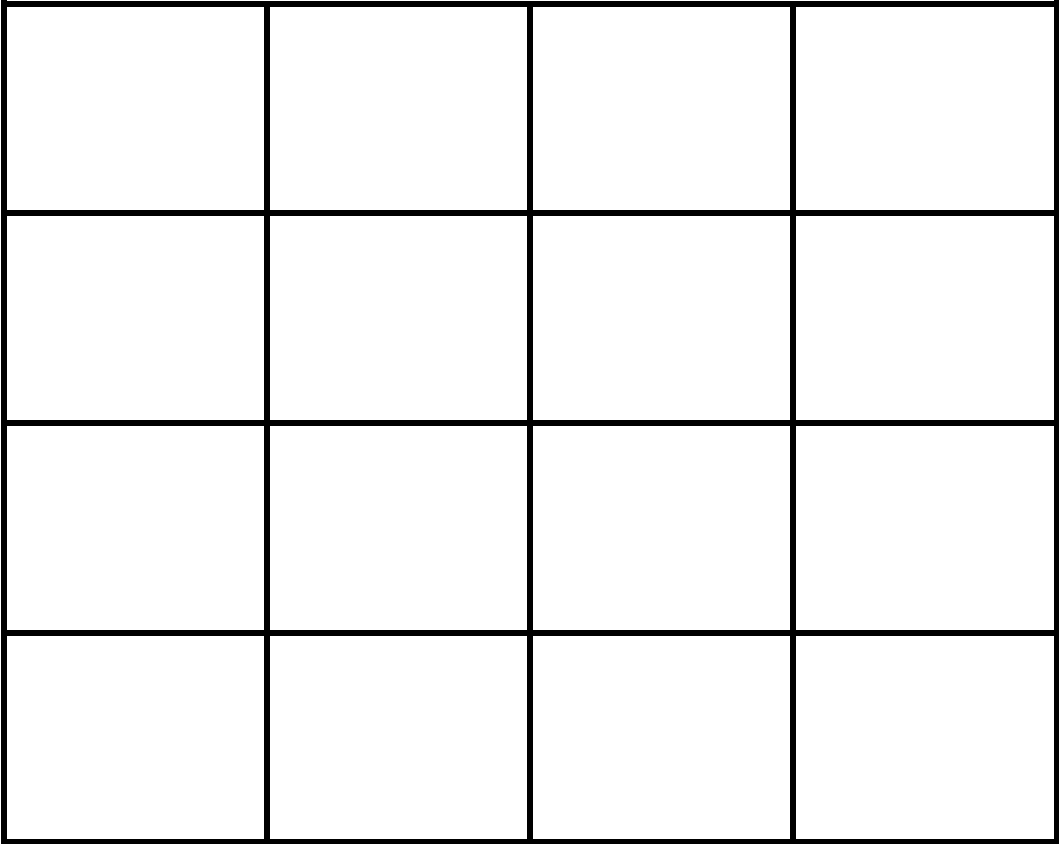
Because of the V sound in the word “OF.” Since people were looking for the F sound, they did not register the V sound. To better accomplish the task, they could have read it upside down. That would have put the focus on counting rather than reading.

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## Stages of Group Development

Stages of Group Development				
	Form	Storm	Norm	Perform
<b>Characteristics of the Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertain</li> <li>• Tentative</li> <li>• Serious</li> <li>• Unclear of Goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict</li> <li>• Team organizing</li> <li>• Goals still unclear</li> <li>• Hostility</li> <li>• Defensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committed to task</li> <li>• Conflicts resolved</li> <li>• Harmony</li> <li>• Sense of team pride</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully functional</li> <li>• Self-organizing</li> <li>• Flexible</li> <li>• Innovative</li> </ul>
<b>Team Member Behaviors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talkative</li> <li>• Polite</li> <li>• Fearful</li> <li>• Anxious</li> <li>• Optimistic</li> <li>• Seeking belonging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disagree</li> <li>• May resist demands of teamwork &amp; homework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comfortable</li> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Share willingly</li> <li>• Enjoy work</li> <li>• Work earnestly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Function well together</li> <li>• Understand others' views</li> <li>• Experience personal growth</li> </ul>
<b>Leader's Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give clear direction</li> <li>• Get members acquainted</li> <li>• Create positive atmosphere</li> <li>• Assign straight-forward, simple tasks</li> <li>• Sensitive to members' need for direction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open up conflict</li> <li>• Move toward negotiation &amp; consensus</li> <li>• Get members to assume more tasks responsibly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let team assign own tasks</li> <li>• Provide direction</li> <li>• Hold celebration</li> <li>• Encourage team to review own goals and progress</li> <li>• Listener &amp; facilitator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate</li> <li>• Consult</li> <li>• Inspire</li> <li>• Be involved in tasks as needed</li> <li>• Keep comms &amp; information flowing</li> <li>• Reinforce &amp; celebrate achievement</li> <li>• Provide new vision</li> </ul>
<b>Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little gets done</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate to high</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very high</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitation Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize</li> <li>• Teach</li> <li>• Ground rules</li> <li>• Set standards</li> <li>• Goal setting</li> <li>• Manage expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen &amp; observe</li> <li>• Enforce ground rules</li> <li>• Conflict management</li> <li>• Patient</li> <li>• Counsel</li> <li>• Advise</li> <li>• Intervention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback</li> <li>• Affirm</li> <li>• Coach</li> <li>• Encourage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster consensus</li> <li>• Coach</li> <li>• Cheerlead</li> <li>• Withdraw</li> </ul>

How many  
squares do you  
see?



Finished Files

Read the sentence enclosed in the box below:

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF  
YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY  
COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE  
OF MANY YEARS.

Count the “Fs” in the sentence. Count them once and do not go back to recount.

Number counted: \_\_\_\_\_